

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. A method of automatically highlighting focused objects within a preview window comprising the steps of:  
receiving a digital representation of an image;  
determining a near focus distance;  
identifying near portions of objects within said image at said near focus distance;  
determining a far focus distance;  
identifying far portions of objects within said image at said far focus distance; and  
highlighting said near portions and said far portions of said objects within said image.

2. The method of claim 1 further including the step of:  
displaying a digital image including said highlighted near and far portions.

3 The method of claim 2 further comprising the step of:  
performing said steps of receiving, determining a near focus distance, identifying near portions, determining a far focus distance, identifying far portions, highlight and displaying within a digital camera.

4 The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:  
determining focused portions of objects between said near portions and said far portions; and  
highlighting said focused portions.

5. The method of claim 4 further including the step of:  
displaying said highlighted focused portions on said digital image.

6. A camera comprising:

an image sensor responsive to a light image projected onto said image sensor for providing image data;

an adjustable focus lens configured to project said light image onto said image sensor;

5 a controller configured to adjust a focus of said adjustable focus lens and receive said image data from said image sensor, said controller further configured to distinguish portions of said image data that represent focused portions of said light image from portions that are not in focus; and

10 a display configured to display said image data together with highlighting distinguishing said portions of said image data that represent said focused portions of said light image from said portions that are not in focus.

7. The camera according to claim 6 further comprising a memory storing a contrast evaluation procedure executable by said controller for distinguishing said portions of said image data that represent said focused portions of said light image from said portions that are not in focus.

8. The camera according to claim 6 wherein said image sensor comprises a two-dimensional array of light detectors.

9. The camera according to claim 6 wherein said adjustable focus lens includes a focusing motor connected to adjust a configuration of optical elements of said adjustable focus lens in response to a control signal from said controller.

10. The camera according to claim 6 wherein said controller is configured to determine contrast values of said light image.

11. The camera according to claim 6 wherein said controller is further configured to process said image data for storage in a memory.

12. The camera according to claim 6 wherein said controller implements a lossy compression algorithm on said image data to form compressed image data and stores said compressed image data in a memory.

13. The method of claim 6 further comprising the step of:  
disabling said highlighting of said near and said far portions.

14. The method of claim 6 further comprising the steps of:  
compressing said digital image to provide compressed image data; and  
storing said compressed image data in a memory.

15. The method of claim 6 wherein said determining said near and said far portions is performed from identified edges of objects contained within the digital representation of an image.

16. The method of claim 6 wherein said highlighting comprises blinking said near and far portions of said image in focus.

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17. A focus highlighting system comprising:  
a processor for highlighting focused portions of an image;  
an autofocus mechanism configured to determine portions of an image within focus;  
a display configured to display a digital image including highlighting; and  
a memory configured to store said digital representation of said image.

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18. The focus highlighting system of claim 17 wherein:  
said autofocus calculates a near focus distance and determines near portions of objects  
using said near focus distance.

19. The focus highlighting system of claim 18 wherein:  
said autofocus calculates a far focus distance and determines far portions of objects  
using said far focus distance.

20. The focus highlighting system of claim 19 wherein:  
said portions of said image include said near focus portions and said far focus  
portions.

21. The focus highlighting system of claim 17 wherein said highlighting includes  
blinking.

22. The focus highlighting of claim 17 further including:  
a disable feature which disables highlighting when selected by a user.

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23. A camera comprising:  
an image sensor;  
an image processor configured to determine portions of objects which appear in focus  
and to highlight said portions; and  
5 a memory configured to store said image captured by said image sensor.

24. The camera according to claim 23 further comprising:  
a display connected to display an image captured by said image sensor including said  
highlighting.

25. The camera according to claim 23 further comprising:  
an image compressor configured to perform compression of said corrected image data.

26. The camera according to claim 25 wherein said image compressor implements  
a lossy image compression algorithm.

27. The camera according to claim 23 further comprising a housing containing  
said image sensor, display, image processor and memory.

28. The camera according to claim 23 wherein said objects which appear in focus  
includes objects at different distances from said camera.